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19th century? Many intelligent men maintained that it belonged to the 19th; and this shows how easily men are bewildered in such speculations. If any one had come to pay them 1800 dollars in parcels of a hundred each, we strongly suspect that they would have claimed the hundredth of the eighteenth parcel as well as the hundredth of all the rest: why not say that ninety-nine years made the first century as well as that 1799 years made eighteen centuries? the ninety-ninth year of a century is not the last: the hundredth is the last.

The American Almanac has now been published for several years, and is probably familiarly known to our readers, if not actually in their hands. Its most important department is understood to be in the hands of Mr. Paine, whose observations command the entire confidence of those most interested in the subject;—no ordinary honor,—since this is a field in which no one can arrive at eminence without really deserving it. In addition to these observations the Almanac furnishes a vast amount of information on various subjects of immediate and public interest; it supplies a treasury to which any one can resort for those facts, which are in constant demand, and yet have never before been made easily accessible, to those who have not libraries within their reach. It is fast taking the place of those lighter publications of the kind, which have so long been in general use, simply for the want of better. We have no doubt that it will prosper; it is now very extensively circulated and every coming year will add to its success.

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### ART. III. — *Memoirs of Casanova.*

*Mémoires de Jacques Casanova de Seingalt, écrits par lui-même.* 10 vols. 12mo. Bruxelles. 1833.

THIS work is a narrative, written by himself, of the adventures of the author, who flourished in the latter part of the last century, and seems from his own shewing to have belonged to the respectable class of *Chevaliers d'Industrie*. The details are not in all cases of the most edifying character, and

we should hesitate about the propriety of noticing the book, if we thought that our account of it would give it any additional circulation. But as there are probably not three copies in the country, there is very little chance of its being, in any event, extensively read. Though fitted, on the whole, if generally circulated, to do more harm than good, it presents a curious, and to the philosophic reader, not uninstructive picture of the state of society in Europe, at the period immediately preceding the French Revolution. It also contains some passages of great interest, of which, as far as our limits may permit, we propose to give a translation.

Although the work was originally written in French, the author was not a native of France, but was born at Venice, in a family of Spanish extraction and respectable standing. The other members of it in several preceding generations seem, however, by his account of them, to have been, like himself, more remarkable for talents and enterprise than for a strict observance of the old-fashioned rules of morality. The seat of the family in Spain was Saragossa. Don Jacob Casanova, one of our hero's ancestors, was private secretary to the king, Saragossa being at that time the capital of the independent kingdom of Aragon. In the year 1428, Don Jacob carried off from her convent Donna Anna Palafox, a nun, the day after she had taken the veil. She was probably of the family of the present distinguished general of that name. Don Jacob went with his prize to Rome, where his uncle Don Juan held the high employment of Master of the Palace to the Pope, and, by his influence at court, relieved the lady from her vows and legalized the union. Don Juan, the only offspring of this marriage that reached maturity, having killed in a duel an officer of the king of Naples, was obliged to quit Rome, and took refuge with his wife and her infant son, Mark Antony, at Como. He afterwards accompanied Columbus on his voyage to America, where he died in 1493. His son, Mark Antony, was secretary to Cardinal Colonna, and a good poet, but was compelled in his turn to quit Rome, where he had given offence by a violent satire against the Cardinal de Medicis, afterwards Pope Clement VII. This prelate, on his accession to the sacred tiara, forgave Mark Antony, and recalled him to Rome, but when the city was sacked by the imperial army, under the Constable de Bourbon, in 1526, he lost every thing. He afterwards died of the plague. Vale-

rian, in his work on the misfortunes of learned men, mentions him as one of the striking examples of the truth which he intended to illustrate. James, a posthumous son of Mark Antony, was a colonel in the army of Henry IV, king of France, and died in France at a very advanced age. He left a son of the same name, who established himself at Parma, and was the immediate progenitor of the author of the work before us, who was born in 1725. Before that time, however, the social position of the family had somewhat changed. Our hero's parents were actors at Venice : he had two brothers of some distinction as painters ; one of them was director of the Academy of Painting, at Dresden.

Our author was intended for the church, and for some time wore the dress of an abbé. Not feeling a strong vocation for the ecclesiastical profession, he, after a while, abandoned it, and took the title of the Chevalier de Seingalt. The order of knighthood to which he belonged seems, however, as we remarked before, to have been substantially that of the *Chevaliers d'Industrie*. He passed his life in travelling from city to city, living in great splendor, principally on the product of his skill in gaming, although he was at times employed in different ways by several of the governments. He also numbered among his other ways and means the art of predicting future events by the aid of a familiar spirit, to whom he gave the name of Paralis, and who made answer through the intervention of cards and numbers, in a way not particularly explained, to any question which our author thought proper to propose. His success in this kind of necromancy seems to have given him a complete ascendency over the minds of certain very respectable old ladies, in France and Italy, who placed the contents of their strong boxes entirely at the discretion of him and his familiar. His fine person and engaging manners were equally successful with the younger part of the fairer portion of the creation, and a large part of the book is occupied by a narrative, in much freer language than suits the taste of the present day, of his adventures of gallantry. His achievements in the line of fortune-telling, attracted at one time the attention of the Inquisition, and he was confined by order of that tribunal in the prison called the Leads,—*les Plombs*,—it being the attic story immediately under the leaden roof of the ducal palace at Venice. The character and situation of this prison-house have lately been rendered familiar

to the public by the work of Silvio Pellico, who was also confined in it. Casanova's apartment was immediately above the hall where the tribunal of the inquisition held its sessions. After a confinement of more than a year he succeeded, in a way that certainly does infinite credit to his address, perseverance, and physical power, in making his escape. He published at the time an account of his imprisonment and escape, which is incorporated in the present work, and forms one of the most amusing passages. Casanova combined with his other qualities a strong taste and aptitude for literature, but has not, we believe, left any work of value.

It is not our purpose to follow our author through the long career of his adventures. Having given our readers a general idea of his character and history, we proceed to lay before them some of the most entertaining passages in the work before us. In his travels about Europe he more than once visited Voltaire at Ferney ; and gives the following account of the conversation at one of these visits.

“ After dinner we went to see Voltaire, who was rising from table as we entered. He was surrounded by a sort of court of ladies and gentlemen, which made my introduction rather a formal one. After being presented, I said to him: M. de Voltaire, this is one of the happiest days of my life. I have been for twenty years your pupil, and I am truly delighted with the opportunity of paying my respects to my master.

“ Sir,’ said he, in reply, ‘after you have been my pupil for twenty years more I hope you will begin to think of paying me for my tuition.’

“ ‘ Certainly,’ said I, ‘if you will promise me to wait so long.’

“ Voltaire’s sally produced a laugh at my expense, but I paid no attention to it, and waited for an occasion to take my revenge. Soon after, he addressed me again, remarking ‘that as I was from Venice I was probably acquainted with Count Algarotti.’

“ ‘ I know him,’ said I, ‘not however because I am from Venice, for seven eighths of my excellent countrymen are entirely ignorant of his existence.’

“ ‘ I should have said that you probably knew him as a man of letters.’

“ ‘ I know him because I passed two months with him at Padua seven years ago. What particularly attracted my attention about him was the admiration which he professed for M. de Voltaire.’

“ ‘ This was flattering to me, but it is not necessary for him to be the admirer of any one in order to obtain the admiration of all.’

“‘ If he had not begun by admiring, Algarotti would never have obtained reputation. As an admirer of Newton he undertook to teach the ladies to talk about light.’

“‘ Did he succeed?’

“‘ Not so well as Fontenelle in his plurality of worlds:—still, to a certain extent, he has succeeded.’

“‘ That is true. If you see him at Bologne I beg you to tell him that I am waiting for his letters on Russia. He can address them to my banker, Bianchi, at Milan, who will transmit them to me.’

“‘ I shall do it with pleasure, if I see him.’

“‘ I am told that the Italians are not satisfied with his style.’

“‘ Assuredly they are not: his language is full of gallicisms; his style is contemptible.’

“‘ You do not think then, that the use of French idioms renders your language more beautiful?’

“‘ On the contrary, they render it insupportable, as the French would be interlarded with German or Italian forms, even though Voltaire himself were the writer.’

“‘ You are right. Every language must be written with purity. Even Livy has been criticised: it has been said that his Latin had a savour of *Patavinity*.’

“‘ When I was studying Latin the Abbé Lazzarini, my instructor, told me he preferred Livy to Sallust.’

“‘ What, the Abbé Lazzarini, author of the tragedy of the *Young Ulysses*? You must have been very young then: I should have been glad to have known him. I was well acquainted with the Abbé Conti, who had been the friend of Newton, and whose tragedies embrace the whole Roman history.’

“‘ I also knew and admired him. I was very young, but I thought myself happy in being admitted into the society of these great men. It seems to me but as yesterday, although so many years have since passed.’

“‘ May I ask you to what branch of literature you are devoted?’

“‘ To none in particular:—I may, perhaps, hereafter make a selection: in the mean time I read as much as I can and make observations as I travel, on men and manners.’

“‘ That is the true way to know them, but the book is after all, too large. You get what you want more easily by reading history.’

“‘ No doubt, if one could depend upon it: the misfortune is that history is tiresome and after all not to be trusted: in travelling you are amused as well as instructed. Horace, whom I know by heart, is my guide-book for all parts of the world.’

“‘ Algarotti also knew Horace by heart. You must certainly be fond of poetry.’

“‘ Passionately.’

“‘ Have you written many sonnets ?’

“‘ Ten or twelve that I think pretty good, and perhaps two or three thousand more that I have never looked at a second time.’

“‘ Sonnets are all the rage in Italy.’

“‘ Yes, if you can properly call rage the disposition to clothe a happy thought in an harmonious form, that may render it effective. A sonnet is difficult because you are limited to exactly fourteen verses, let the subject be what it will.’

“‘ It is a sort of bed of Procrustes, and that is the reason why there are so few good ones. In French we have not one, but that is the fault of our language.’

“‘ And also of your character : you believe that a thought a little expanded loses all its force and brilliancy.’

“‘ Is not that your opinion ?’

“‘ Pardon me,—that depends entirely upon what the thought is. A *bon mot* for example is not sufficient to fill up a sonnet, whether in French or Italian, it will only make an epigram.’

“‘ Which of the Italian poets do you prefer ?’

“‘ Ariosto : I cannot perhaps properly say that I prefer him to the others, because he is the only one that I like.’

“‘ You are of course familiar with the others ?’

“‘ I think I have read them all, but they all sink into nothing by the side of Ariosto. At fifteen years old I had read what you have written against him, and I then said that when you had read him you would retract it all.’

“‘ I am indebted to you for believing that I had not read him. The truth is, however, that I had read him, but I was very young, knew the language imperfectly and was prejudiced against him by some of the Italian scholars, who preferred Tasso. Under these circumstances I unfortunately published opinions respecting him which I thought my own, but which were in fact only an echo of the prepossessions of others. I now worship Ariosto.’

“‘ Ah ! M. de Voltaire ! you give me great pleasure by saying so. But will you not excommunicate the book in which you ridicule this great poet ?’

“‘ What good would that do ? My works are all excommunicated ? I will give, however, a proof of my conversion.’

“ Voltaire then began to recite two long passages of the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth cantos, in which the poet relates the conversations of Astolfo with the apostle St. John, and he did it without a single omission or mistake. He afterwards pointed out their beauties with singular sagacity and correctness of taste. The ablest Italian commentator could not have done it with more propriety. I listened to him with the greatest attention, scarcely breathing, and hoping to hear him make some mistake, but I lost my labor. When he had done I turned to the company and ex-

claimed that I was more than surprised and that I should inform all Italy of my just admiration. And I, replied Voltaire, shall inform all Europe of the reparation that I owe to the memory of the greatest genius that she has produced.

“The next day Voltaire gave me a translation that he had made of the stanza of Ariosto, beginning with this line :

‘Quindi avvien que tra principi e signori.

“It is as follows : —

‘Les papes, les Césars, appasiant leur querelle,  
Jurent sur l’Evangile une paix éternelle ;  
Vous les voyez l’un de l’autre ennemis,  
C’était pour se tromper qu’ils s’étoient réunis ;  
Nul serment n’est gardé, nul accord n’est sincère,  
Quand la bouche a parlé, le coeur dit le contraire,  
Du ciel qu’ils attestaienr ils bravaient le courroux,  
L’intérêt est le Dieu qui les gouverne tous.’

“After Voltaire had finished his recitation, which was loudly applauded by all the company, although none of them understood Italian, his niece Madame Denis asked me if I thought the passage which her uncle had just repeated, one of the finest in the poem.

“‘I do,’ replied I, ‘but I prefer the thirty-six last stanzas of the twenty-third canto, in which the poet describes the madness of Orlando.’

‘Perhaps,’ said Madame Denis, casting a sidelong look at her uncle, ‘you will have the goodness to recite them to us.’

“‘Willingly, Madame,’ said I, ‘if you would like to hear them.’

“‘Then you have taken the trouble to commit them to memory,’ said Voltaire.

“‘Say rather the pleasure,’ said I, ‘for it has given me no trouble. Since the age of sixteen I have never passed a year without reading the Orlando two or three times over : it is my passion, and I have got it naturally by heart without taking any pains to do so. I know the whole, excepting the genealogical and historical details, which fatigue the mind without engaging the feelings. Of Horace I can repeat every verse, notwithstanding the prosaic character of some of the epistles, which are far from being equal to those of Boileau.’

“‘Boileau,’ said Voltaire, ‘is a little too much of a courtier : as to Horace, I can easily conceive of your knowing him by heart, but Ariosto’s forty long cantos are rather too much.’

“‘Fifty-one, if you please, M. de Voltaire,’ said I. The great man said nothing more, and Madame Denis called for the recital of the thirty-six stanzas.

“I then began in a firm tone, but not in the monotonous manner, with which the French are so justly reproached by the Ital-

ians. The French would declaim better than any other people if they were not embarrassed by their rhymes, for they know how to express more correctly what they feel. They have not the impassioned and monotonous tone of my countrymen, nor the sentimental and extravagant manner of the Germans, nor yet the tedious drawl of the English. They give to every sentence the tone and the sound of voice which agree best with the nature of the sentiment to be expressed, but the constant return of the same sounds deprives them of some of their advantages. I recited the beautiful verses of Ariosto, like a fine measured prose, accompanying it with gestures, looks and modulations of voice according to the sentiment which I wished to convey to the audience. I found it difficult to refrain from tears, and the company were all in the same state. At length, when I came to the stanza—

‘Poiche allargare il freno al dolor puote,  
Che resta solo senza altri rispetto,  
Giu dagli occhi rigando per le gote  
Spargo un fiume de lacrime sul petto,’

the stream burst forth, and the company at the same time began to sob. Voltaire and Madame Denis threw their arms round my neck; but I proceeded, without permitting them to interrupt me, through the stanzas which describe Orlando’s madness. In reciting them, I exchanged the plaintive and mournful tone for a violent one, corresponding with the actions of the hero, who is represented as tearing up rocks and trees with the power and fury of a tempest or a volcano.

“When I had finished, I received, with a serious air, the congratulations of the whole company. ‘Horace is right,’ said Voltaire, ‘and I always said so. The secret of making others weep is to weep yourself; but the tears must be real, and in order to shed them the feelings must be deeply moved. I thank you, sir, said he, embracing me, and I promise you that I will recite the same verses to-morrow and shed tears, as you have done.’ He kept his word.

“It is surprising, said Madame Denis, that the Orlando was not placed upon the list of prohibited books.

“Instead of that,’ said Voltaire, ‘Leo X. excommunicated in advance, any one who should venture to condemn it. The two great families of Este and Medicis were interested in sustaining Ariosto. Without their protection the single verse upon the grant of Rome by Constantine to Pope Sylvester, which as the poet says, *puzza forte*, (smells very strong,) would have been sufficient of itself to condemn the whole poem.’

“‘I think,’ said I, ‘that the verse which excited the greatest trouble was the one in which Ariosto calls in question the resurrection. In speaking of the hermit who wished to prevent Rodo-

mont from getting possession of Isabella, the widow of Zerbino, he represents the African as so completely tired out with his preaching, that he finally seizes him and hurls him to a great distance against a rock, where, says the poet, he will remain senseless, perhaps till the day of judgment, *che al novissimo di forse sia desto*. This *forse*, 'perhaps,' which the poet may have inserted merely as a figure of rhetoric, or for the purpose of filling up the verse created a great excitement, which would doubtless have amused Ariosto very much if he had had time to pay attention to it.'

"The next day Charles Fox came to visit me, with two Englishmen whom I had seen at Voltaire's. We afterwards dined at the Delices, and had with us, among other guests, the Duke de Villars. Voltaire put forth all the resources of his brilliant and fertile imagination, and completely charmed us, notwithstanding his occasional caustic remarks upon persons present. He lived very handsomely and at great expense,—a rare thing with poets, who are not often favorites of Plutus. He was at this time sixty years old, and had an income of one hundred thousand francs. It has been said that he enriched himself by cheating the booksellers, but the truth is, that he was often cheated by them. He made his fortune in other ways, and often gave away his manuscripts on condition only that they should be published and circulated. While I was with him he made a present in this way of his pretty tale, *The Princess of Babylon*, which he wrote in three days."

The most amusing passage in the work, as we before remarked, is the one which describes the author's imprisonment in the Leads, and his escape. It is given in great detail, and occupies half of one of the volumes. It was published at the time as a separate work, and would now be read with great interest in a translation. Within the narrow limits that remain to us, we can only give a very general outline of the narrative, and an extract from the close.

At day-light, on the 25th of July, 1755, our author was roused from sleep by a visit from an officer of the Inquisition who entered his bedchamber, accompanied by forty soldiers, and took him away to prison. No warrant was exhibited, nor does it appear from the account, that he was ever brought to trial or even examined. The officer who arrested him inquired for certain books treating of astrology and necromancy, which he had in his possession, and he was led by this circumstance to suppose that he was charged with dealing in these forbidden arts, but this charge he considered as a mere cover for private malignity of some description. He was conveyed forthwith

in a gondola to the quay of the prison, and thence over the famous *Bridge of Sighs* into the Ducal Palace, and up to the Leads where he was locked up by a jailor in a cell, of which he gives the following description.

“The jailor made me a sign to enter, which I did by stooping very low and after locking me in, he asked me through a grated hole in the door, what I would have to eat. I told him that I had not yet made up my mind, and he then left me, locking several doors after him with great care. The opening in the door was two feet square, and was grated with six iron bars an inch thick. There was a window in the outer room, which would have rendered my cell tolerably light had there not been a large beam between it and the grate. My cell was about twelve feet square and five and a half high, with a little alcove on one side, intended for a bed, but there was neither bed, table nor chair in it, nor any other furniture but a single bench fixed to the wall. On that I placed my silk mantle, my elegant coat, and my hat, which was embroidered with point lace and ornamented with a white *plumet*. I then went to the door and looked through the grated opening into the next room, where a number of overgrown rats were walking very much at their ease about the floor. I hastily closed the grate and remained for eight hours leaning on my elbows upon the casement in a sort of reverie.”

Our author finally fell asleep, but was roused after a few hours, and on recovering his senses met with an adventure which would do no discredit to the sombre records of the Mysteries of Udolpho.

“The midnight bell roused me from sleep. I could hardly believe that I had passed three hours without suffering any uneasiness. I was lying on my left side, and without changing my position I extended my right arm to take a handkerchief, which I recollect that I had placed there. Great God! What was my horror when on feeling about for it my hand encountered another hand as cold as ice! Terror electrified me in every limb, and my hair stood erect upon my head. Never in my life did I experience such a fit of terror, nor could I have supposed that I was susceptible of it to such a degree. I passed three or four minutes in a state of annihilation, not only without moving, but, I may say, without venturing even to think. Recovering myself I finally thought that the cold hand which I had encountered might perhaps be merely an effect of imagination, and in this hope I again extended my arm in the same direction. Again I met the same icy hand. Shuddering with horror I now sent forth a wild shriek, and throwing off the hand drew back my own arm. When I had

had a little time for reflection I concluded that while I was asleep a dead body must have been brought in and deposited by my side, for I was sure that there was none there before. It is probably, said I to myself, the body of some wretch who has been strangled, and they wish in this way to prepare me for the fate that awaits me. This reflection exasperated me, and the terror that I had felt gave way to rage. A third time I extended my arm towards the icy hand and seized it firmly in order to assure myself fully of the atrocious act. I then attempted to rise. When I came to lean upon my left elbow I discovered that the hand of ice was no other than my own left hand, which had been pressed between my body and the floor so long that it had become entirely insensible."

Within these melancholy walls the cheering sound of *Habeas Corpus* was never heard, and the poor prisoner is compelled to drag out the weary months and years, until the spontaneous action of justice, the intercession of friends, or death, puts an end to his misery. Our author relates in great detail his manner of passing his time, and the adventures of two or three persons who were successively put into the cell with him. Into these, we of course, cannot enter. He for a long time flattered himself that he should be released at the close of the political year, when the members of the Tribunal of the Inquisition were changed; but this period passed over without any such result, and he then began to think very seriously of making his escape. He had been permitted occasionally to quit his cell and walk in the adjoining rooms, and had there found an iron bolt a foot and a half long and an inch thick, which with infinite labor and the help of a fragment of marble obtained in the same way, he succeeded in fashioning into a sort of spontoon, which was ultimately the instrument of his deliverance. He also provided himself by the use of great address, and, as it would seem by the connivance of the jailor, with a lamp, which enabled him to carry on his operations during the night. Thus prepared he set to work and began to make an opening in the floor of his cell, which, as we have remarked, was situated immediately above the hall where the Inquisition held their sittings.

"As soon as I found myself alone, I went to work with great activity. I was anxious to proceed as rapidly as possible, that I might not be interrupted by the introduction of another companion. I began by removing the bed; and having lighted the

lamp, I threw myself on the floor with the spontoon in my hand, and a napkin near it, to receive the pieces of wood which I should chip off. My object was to make an opening through the floor with the point of my instrument. The chips were at first not longer than grains of wheat; but they soon increased in size. The boards, which I undertook to cut through, were of larch, and sixteen inches wide. I began at a place where two of them touched each other; and as there was no iron work in the way, my labors were easy enough. After working six hours, I tied up my napkin and put it aside, in order to empty it the next day behind the heap of papers in the adjoining room. The chips formed a mass five or six times as large as the hole from which they were taken, and which was about ten inches broad, with an inclination of thirty degrees. I now brought back the bed to its former place, and the next day, in emptying my napkin, I assured myself that the fragments would not be perceived.

“ The following day, I cut through the first board, which was two inches thick, and found another under it, which I supposed to be of the same dimensions. I now redoubled my efforts, and in three weeks I had penetrated the three boards which composed the floor. Here, however, I thought myself at a stand, for under the last board I found a composition of pieces of marble, known at Venice under the name of *terrazzo marmorin*. This is the usual flooring in the great Venetian houses, and is even preferred to the handsomest *parquets*. I was struck with consternation when I found that my instrument would not enter this composition. This accident had nearly discouraged me; but I then recollect that Livy describes Hannibal, in his passage over the Alps, as breaking through rocks, after softening them with *vinegar*. I had some doubts whether the word translated *vinegar*, does not really mean an *axe*; but I nevertheless poured into the opening that I had made, a bottle of vinegar that I had with me; and whether it was from the effect of this, or whether I wrought the next day with more vigor, after a night’s rest, I found that there was no great difficulty in pulverizing, with the point of my spontoon, the cement that united the pieces of marble. In four days I had pierced this mosaic, without at all injuring the point of my instrument. Under the pavement I found another board, as I expected, and I was satisfied that this must be the last. I attacked it with some difficulty, for the opening being now ten inches deep, I had but little room to manage my instrument. I implored, a thousand times, the mercy of God. Free thinkers, who deny the utility of prayer, are greatly deceived. I know, by my own experience, that after prayer, I always found myself more vigorous; and whether the increase

of strength be the immediate gift of God, or the mere effect of augmented confidence, it is, in either case, equally useful.

“On the 25th of June, the day on which the Republic of Venice celebrates the appearance of St. Mark, under the form of a winged lion, in the ducal palace, as I was laboring, at three o’clock in the afternoon, with my lamp lighted by my side, stretched upon my face, on the floor, stripped to the skin, and dripping with perspiration, I suddenly heard, with unspeakable terror, the rumbling of the bolt of the outer door. What a terrible moment! I at once extinguished the lamp; and, leaving my instrument in the hole, and throwing in the napkin, with the chips above it, I replaced the bed as well as I could, and threw myself upon it, more dead than alive, at the instant when the jailer opened the door of my cell. Had he entered two seconds sooner, he would have surprised me. He was about to tread upon my body, when I prevented him, by a loud cry, which made him start back. ‘Good God! Sir,’ said he, ‘your cell is like a furnace; rise, and give thanks to God, who has sent you excellent company.’”

The purpose of this unseasonable visit was to introduce another prisoner into the cell, whose presence interrupted our author’s labors for several weeks. The new comer is at length withdrawn, and the narrative proceeds as follows :

“I now resumed my work, and pursued it perseveringly, until on the 23d of August, I brought it to a close. In cutting through the last plank, I proceeded with great circumspection, and, on reaching the lower surface, I made a small puncture, through which I expected to see the Inquisitors’ Hall. On putting my eye to the puncture, I in fact saw the Hall, but I also saw, at the side of my opening, a perpendicular surface of eight inches. This was the side of one of the beams which supported the ceiling, and it passed, as I had feared might be the case, under a part of my excavation. I was consequently obliged to extend the opening on the opposite side, which occasioned a good deal of delay, and I wrought with the constant terror that the spaces between the beams might not be wide enough to permit me to pass. After extending my excavation, I found, by looking through a puncture, that Providence had blessed my labors. I then carefully closed the two punctures, lest a ray of light from my lamp, or something falling through them into the Hall, should betray me.

“Having thus completed my arrangement, I fixed on the eve of the festival of St. Augustin, as the time for my escape, because I knew that on account of that festival the great council would be in session, and that there would be no one in the Bussola, an apartment through which I was to pass out of the Hall. That

festival was to happen on the 27th. On the 25th an event occurred, which defeated, for the time, all my hopes. Precisely at noon, on that day, I heard the bolts withdrawn, and the jailer, putting in his head through the grate, cried out, in a joyous tone, 'I congratulate you on the good news that I have to bring you.' I thought, at first, that he must have come to announce my release from confinement, and I shuddered at the thought that the discovery of my preparations for escape would probably lead to a revocation of the pardon. He entered, however, and told me to follow him.

" 'Wait till I have dressed me,' said I.

" 'Never mind,' said he, 'you are only going from this wretched cell into another and a much pleasanter one, with two windows in it, from which you may have a view of half Venice; a cell in which you can stand upright.'

" I could hear no more. I felt myself fainting. ' Give me some vinegar,' said I, ' and go and tell the secretary that I humbly thank the tribunal for this favor, but that I beg of them to let me remain where I am.'

" 'Nonsense!' replied the keeper, 'you make me laugh. We are taking you out of purgatory, and putting you into a little paradise, and you refuse to go. Come, come, you must obey. I will give you my arm, and will order your effects to be brought after you.'

" Seeing that opposition would be of no use, I arose to comply, and was greatly relieved when I found that the servant was directed to bring up my arm chair. My spontoon, which I had secreted in it, was thus to follow me, and hope with it. How delighted should I have been, could I have also carried away my *beautiful hole*, upon which I had wasted so much labor! I can truly say, that when I left this horrible place, my whole heart remained behind."

Such was the result of our author's first attempt at escape. The jailer was afraid to inform the tribunal lest he should be supposed himself to have connived at it, and Casanova found himself no worse off than before. No sooner was he settled in his new quarters than he began to meditate new projects, and these were facilitated by the communication which he succeeded in opening with another prisoner. He was permitted by the jailer to exchange books with a monk occupying the next cell, named Balbi, and the books which they sent each other were made the vehicle of a written correspondence. In carrying on this correspondence our author employed as a pen his little finger nail, which he had permitted to grow out and brought to a

point, and used mulberry juice for ink. As every part of his own cell was now daily examined by the jailer he determined to commence operations in that of his correspondent, and succeeded in conveying the spontoon to him in the open back of a large bible. With this potent machine Balbi was to make an opening in the ceiling of his own cell, and having thus got into the apartment above, to cut through the partition wall, and finally make an opening from above in the ceiling of the cell of Casanova. When they had both in this way got from their cells into the apartment over them, which was immediately under the roof of the building, they were to effect their escape by getting out upon the roof and then taking their chance of what might occur. This plan, desperate as it may appear, finally succeeded, although it was obstructed by various interruptions, one of which, as in the former case, was occasioned by the introduction of another prisoner into our author's cell. The details of the manner in which this and all the other difficulties were obviated, are given in a very particular and entertaining manner. Immediately on receiving the spontoon Balbi began to work, concealing what he did as he advanced, by hanging his room with engravings, one of which was made to cover the opening. While the affair was in progress our author took occasion to enlighten himself as to its probable results by a sort of divination formerly in use, under the name of the *Sortes Virgilianæ*, which consisted in opening Virgil at random, and taking the first verse on the top of the page as an oracle. Our author, having no Virgil, employed his favorite Ariosto, and proceeded in the following manner.

“I wrote down a question, addressed to my supposed familiar spirit, inquiring of him in what canto of Ariosto I should find the prediction of the day of my escape. This question I turned into numbers, from which I extracted an answer according to certain rules which I was in the habit of employing in telling fortunes. The canto indicated was the ninth. Proceeding in the same way I obtained the seventh and first as the numbers of the stanza and verse. I now took the poem and turning to the passage indicated found the following verse.

‘Tra il fin d’ Ottobre e il capo di Novembre.’

“Between the close of October and the beginning of November.” It is not a little singular that it was precisely at midnight on the last day of October, as the reader will presently see, that he effected his escape. As he did not enter his new cell till

the 25th of August, he certainly deserved great credit for the rapidity with which he brought his labors to a successful close. On getting into the garret above and reconnoitering the roof, which was covered with tiles, and over them with leaden plates, he found that he could easily make an opening through both with the invaluable spontoon. He then returned to his cell and employed four hours in converting his sheets, coverlets, mattresses and straw bed into ropes, of which he made a hundred fathom. Having thus completed all the preliminary operations, he commenced his labors, which he describes in the following manner.

“ I succeeded without assistance in making an opening in the roof twice as large as I wanted and reached the leaden plate. I could not raise this alone, because it was riveted down, but with the aid of Balbi and the vigorous use of the spontoon I detached it and turning over a part of it, made an ample aperture. On putting my head through this aperture I saw with pain that there was a bright moon-light. This made it necessary to wait till about midnight, when the moon would have gone down. On a fine moonlight night the whole fashionable world of Venice is in the habit of walking in the square of St. Mark. Under these circumstances the shadows that we should have cast, had we gone out upon the roof, would undoubtedly have been noticed at once, and would have attracted the attention of the officers of the Holy Inquisition. After midnight we should have, at this season of short days, about seven hours before us, which would be amply sufficient for the purpose. We accordingly returned to the cell and passed three hours in conversation. After the moon had gone down, we divided the effects we had to carry between us, and proceeded to the opening, through which, in the language of Dante, we went out to look at the stars.

‘ E quindi uscimmo a rimirar le stelle.’

“ We wore jackets and trowsers, with hats on our heads. I went out first and Balbi followed. Sustaining myself on my hands and knees, I lifted up successively the edges of the plates of lead with the point of my spontoon, and then taking hold of them with my four fingers, raised myself gradually to the ridge-pole of the roof. The monk supported himself by grasping my waistband, and I was obliged to draw him up with me, and this over a very steep ascent, rendered slippery by a thick mist. When we had got about half way up the monk begged me to stop, saying that he had lost one of his parcels and hoped that it had not got below the gutter. My first impulse was to give him a kick and send him after his parcel, but thanks to Providence I had discretion

enough to contain myself, and it was well for me that I had, for I could not have escaped alone. I asked him whether it contained our cords. He replied that it was a manuscript which he had found in the garret over the cells, and which he thought would sell for something handsome. I then told him that he had better bear the loss with patience, for that a single step backwards might be fatal to us. The poor monk groaned in the spirit, and still hanging on upon my waistband, followed me up.

“After getting with much difficulty over fifteen or sixteen leaden plates, we reached the ridge-pole and placed ourselves astride upon it. We had behind us the little island of St. George the Elder, and before us at two hundred paces distance the numerous cupolas of the church of St. Mark, which makes a part of the Doge’s palace. I now began to relieve myself of my parcels, and invited my companion to do the same. He placed his bundle of ropes under him as well as he could, but in endeavoring to lay aside his hat he lost his hold of it, and it rolled from plate to plate into the gutter, where it followed the other parcel into the canal. My poor comrade was a good deal distressed. ‘A bad sign this!’ said he; ‘here I am at the outset, without my hat, besides losing my curious account of the festivals of Venice.’ Being now in rather better humor, I quietly told him that these two accidents were not extraordinary, and ought not to be viewed as bad omens. ‘Let them rather teach you,’ said I, ‘to be prudent, and to recollect that we are under the protection of Providence. If your hat had gone to the left instead of the right we should have been ruined. It would have fallen into the court instead of the canal, and would infallibly have given an alarm, which would have led to our apprehension.’

“After passing several minutes in looking to the right and left, I told the monk to remain where he was, until my return, and I pushed myself forward without any difficulty, upon the ridge-pole. I employed about an hour, in going, in this way, over the whole roof, and carefully observed every part of it; but I could see nothing upon any of the sides to which I could fasten the end of a rope. It was necessary, therefore, to abandon the idea of descending into the canal, or the palace court; and there was nothing on the top of the church, between the domes, that seemed to favor our purpose. If we crossed this church, and attempted to get up the roof of the Canonica, the ascent would be so steep as to be almost impracticable; and, though I was disposed to be bold, I wished to avoid the least imprudence.

“It was, however, necessary to decide upon something, and I finally fixed my eyes upon an upright window in the roof, on the side of the canal, and about two thirds of the way down towards the gutter. It was at such a distance from the place where we

came out, that it probably did not open upon the garret of our cells, but upon some other, belonging to an apartment in the palace, which would be open at daylight. I was quite confident that the servants in attendance, even those of the Doge's family, would assist our escape, out of hatred to the Inquisition, had they even supposed us to be the greatest criminals. Under this impression, I determined to examine the front of the window, and sliding gently down, I soon found myself astride, upon the top of its little roof. I then took hold of the sides with both hands, and advancing my head, I could see and feel a small grate, behind which was a window, glazed with diamond panes of glass, set in lead. The window presented no obstacle; but the grate, small as it was, seemed to be an invincible difficulty, for without a file I did not see how I could possibly remove it; and as I had nothing but my spontoon, I was greatly disappointed, and began to lose courage, when a slight accident restored my spirits.

“ Dear reader! if you will but imagine yourself, for a moment, in my position; if you will but recollect the torments to which I had been subjected for fifteen months, and the danger to which I was now exposed, upon a roof of lead, where the slightest false movement would have deprived me of life; if you will reflect that I had only a few hours to overcome all the difficulties that might occur to prevent my escape, and that if I failed I should suffer an increase of severity from the horrible tribunal which had me in its power: if, I say, you will consider these things, you will not, I trust, however philosophically disposed you may be, think the worse of me for the candid confession that I am about to make, especially when you take into view the natural tendency of adversity and distress to weaken the mind. I must own, then, should it even injure me in your opinion, that the circumstance to which I allude, as having exercised a cheering influence upon my spirits, was the sound of the clock of St. Mark, which just then struck twelve. It reminded me at once of the oracle which I had obtained from my favorite Ariosto: *Tra il fin d'Ottobre e il capo di Novembre.* And it seemed to be a sort of speaking talisman, which commanded me to act, and promised me success. I resumed my work, and, on examining the grate again, I found that by inserting the point of my spontoon between it and the casement, I could, perhaps, remove it entirely. After a quarter of an hour's labor, I succeeded in this, and taking out the grate entire, I placed it on the roof by the side of the window. I then found no difficulty in breaking the glass, although I wounded one of my hands in the operation.

“ I now returned to the top of the roof, and made my way to the place where I had left my companion. I found him in a great rage, and he abused me outrageously for leaving him so long

alone, saying, that he had been upon the point of returning to the cell. I asked him what he thought had become of me? 'I thought,' said he, 'that you must have fallen from the roof.'

" ' And is this the way in which you express your pleasure at seeing me again ? '

" ' What have you been doing all this time ? '

" ' Follow me,' said I , ' and you shall see.'

" We then resumed our parcels, and proceeded towards the window ; when we had reached the point above it, I gave Balbi a full account of what I had done, and consulted him upon the best means of getting into the window. It was easy enough for one, as by means of the cord he could be let down by the other ; but I did not see what could be done for the second, as there was no way of fastening the cord to the window. By entering, and letting myself fall, I might break my arms and legs, and I did not like to venture without knowing the distance from the window to the floor. I communicated these reflections to Balbi in a tone of the most friendly interest. His reply was, ' take care of me first, and when I am fairly in, you will have time enough to think of yourself.'

" I confess that I was tempted for a moment on hearing this answer, to plunge my spontoon into his breast. I restrained myself however, and did not utter a word of reproach, but proceeded at once as he suggested, to take care of him. Undoing my parcel of cord, I tied one end firmly round his body, and making him lie down upon his breast, with his feet downwards, I lowered him to the top of the window. When he was there I directed him to get in and hold on by the sides of the casement, which he did. I then descended, myself, to the top of the window, as I had done before, and placing myself astride on the top, I grasped the cord firmly, and told the monk to let himself down. When he reached the floor he detached the rope, and upon drawing it up, I found that the distance was more than fifty feet. This was too far to think of leaping. The monk, who now thought himself safe, after passing two hours of mortal terror in a position that was certainly not very satisfactory, called out to me to throw him the rope, and that he would take care of it. It will be readily believed that I did not follow this wise counsel.

" Not knowing what to do, and waiting for some new thought, I returned to the top of the roof and I now remarked a dome, which I had not yet examined. Upon approaching it, I found a flat terrace covered with lead, before a window, which was fastened with two bolts. The terrace was undergoing some repair, and I found here a tub filled with mortar, a trowel, and a ladder, which I thought might be long enough to enable me to descend into the garret, where I had left my companion. I accordingly tied the

end of my rope to the first round, and dragged the ladder to the window. It was about twelve fathom long, and the difficulty was to get it in, in doing which I found so many obstacles, that I regretted not having the assistance of the monk.

“I had let down the ladder into such a position that one of its ends touched the window, and the other extended about one third of its length over the gutter. I now descended to the top of the window, and drawing up the ladder, fastened the rope to the eighth round, after which I let it down again, and then attempted to introduce the end next me into the window. I found, however, after getting in a few rounds, that the end struck against the roof on the inside, and that there was no way of introducing it any further without raising the lower end. I might have placed the ladder across the window, and by fastening the rope to one of the rounds, have let myself down without danger, but the ladder would then have remained on the spot, and would have furnished the means of discovering our retreat, perhaps before we had quitted it. Determined not to lose by any imprudent act, the fruit of so much labor, I sought for some way of introducing the whole ladder, and having no one to assist me, I resolved to descend, myself, to the cornice, and see if I could effect it. This I did, but with so much danger, that without a sort of miracle, I could not have escaped with my life. Holding my spontoon, I let myself down gently to the cornice by the side of the ladder. I lay upon my breast and rested the ends of my feet upon the side of the marble gutter. In this position I had strength enough to raise the ladder half a foot, and, pushing it forward, I had the satisfaction to see it enter the window to the length of a foot. This considerably diminished the weight. I had now only to push it in two feet more by raising it to that height, and I was certain that it would enter. In order to effect this, I attempted to rise upon my knees, but the effort which I made to do this made me slip, and I found my lower extremities thrown over the edge of the roof, upon which I now supported myself upon my elbows and breast.

“At the recollection of that moment I still shudder, and it would be impossible to describe it in all its horror. The natural instinct of self-preservation made me instantaneously use all the strength I had in my arms and body to stop my descent, and I hardly know by what miracle it was, that I succeeded. I had nothing to fear as to the ladder, for in the unfortunate effort which I had just made, I had pushed it in three feet, and thus rendered it immovable. I now perceived that if I could raise my right leg, so as to place the knee upon the gutter, and then the other in the same way, I should be out of danger; but I had not yet reached the end of my troubles. The effort that I made to raise my leg occasioned such a violent muscular contraction that it brought on

a cramp, which deprived me for a moment of the use of the limb. I retained my self-possession, and having often experienced that the best remedy for an accidental cramp is to remain entirely motionless, I applied it in the present instance. What a fearful interval! In about two minutes I renewed my attempt, and gradually placed myself on both knees upon the gutter. When I had taken breath I carefully raised the ladder to the proper height, and then returning to the window with the help of my spontoon in the same way in which I first ascended the roof, I pushed it in to the full length. My companion received the end of it in his arms, and, after throwing down the rope and our parcels, I descended myself without any difficulty. We then proceeded to reconnoitre our position.

“At one end of the room we found a large door composed of iron bars. This was no very good sign, but when I placed my hand on a latch in the middle it yielded and the door opened. We then made the tour of the next room, and crossing it encountered a table and some chairs. We also found some windows and opened one of them, from which we could see nothing but domes and perpendicular walls. Not knowing where we were, I could not think of letting myself down outside, and having closed the window again, we returned to the place where we had left our parcels. Being now completely exhausted, I threw myself upon the floor, and placing a parcel of ropes under my head, fell asleep. Had death itself been the immediate consequence I could not have held out longer. I slept about three hours and a half, when the monk roused me, but with difficulty. He could not conceive how I could sleep in the situation in which we were. This was, however, not at all surprising. For the two days preceding, my agitation had prevented me from taking either food or rest, and the efforts which I had just made were enough of themselves to exhaust the strength of any man. Sleep, however, recruited me entirely, and I found on waking, that we had now light enough to proceed with assurance.

“As soon as I had cast my eyes around, I said to the monk that this room was no part of the prisons and that we could easily make our escape. We took the direction opposite to the iron door and found another. I felt about it till I put my finger upon the key-hole, and introducing the end of my spontoon, I soon opened the door. This conducted us into another chamber out of which we passed through another door that was not locked, into a gallery covered with pigeon-holes filled with papers. These were the public archives. At the end of this gallery we found a little stone staircase, which we descended, and then a second, at the bottom of which a glass door opened into the ducal chancery. I opened one of the windows of this room and might easily have let myself

down, but not knowing where I should fall, I did not like to take the risk. I went to the door of the chancery and attempted to unlock it with the point of my spontoon, but finding this impossible I proceeded to cut an opening through it with that instrument. The monk, who aided me as well as he could, was alarmed at the noise I made, which might have been heard at a considerable distance. I felt the danger myself, but it was inevitable.

“In half an hour I had made an opening which was sufficiently large, and it was well that it was, for it could not have been made larger without the aid of a saw. It was rather a difficult and painful business to get through, for the sides of the hole were filled with sharp points that tore both clothes and flesh. We succeeded however, though not without several severe wounds. When I had got through, I collected our parcels, and descending two staircases, opened, without much trouble, the door which leads into the principal passage from the exterior of the building. The outer door which closes this entrance was locked, and I saw at once, that I could not think of forcing it. I therefore sat down quietly and resigned myself to my fate, advising the monk to do the same. ‘My work is done,’ said I. ‘It remains for Providence or fortune to do the rest. I know not whether the domestics will come here to sweep to-day or to-morrow, both being great festivals. If any one comes I shall make my escape as soon as I see the door open; if not, I shall stay here, and if I die with hunger, so much the worse.’ The monk was furious; he called me madman, deceiver and liar, but I paid no attention to him. At this time the clock struck six, and I found that one hour had passed since I awoke in the garret.

“I now proceeded to change my clothes, and with my laced hat and rich dress must have had at this time of day and under the circumstances, very much the appearance of a rake who had been carried in a drunken frolic to the watch-house. In this costume I went to a window and was seen there by some of the idlers in the court, who went and gave notice to the porter. I regretted, on reflection, that I had gone to the window, from a fear that I might have betrayed myself, but the effect proved to be good. The porter, hearing that a gentleman in full dress was seen at the window, supposed that he had accidentally locked in somebody the night before, and came to open the outer door. I was seated near the monk, listening to his stupid abuse, when the rattling of the keys struck my ears. I rose immediately, and looking through a crevice, I saw a single man with a wig on and without a hat, who was slowly mounting the steps, with a large bunch of keys in his hand. I told the monk in a very serious tone not to open his mouth, and to follow me. I held the spontoon in my right hand under my coat, and placed myself near the door,

in such a position that I could go out as soon as it should open. I devoutly prayed that the porter might not attempt to stop me, for if he had I was determined to despatch him.

“At length the door opened. On seeing me the porter stood aghast, but without stopping to explain the matter, I sprang out at once, followed by the monk. Without appearing to run, but walking as fast as I could, I went down the magnificent steps, called the giant’s stair, and proceeded directly to the royal gate of the palace, and thence across the square to the quay. My object was to escape as soon as possible from the territory of the Most Serene Republic, and going on board the first gondola I saw, I gave directions to the boatman to row me to Fusina.”

After clearing the palace, our author found but little difficulty in effecting his escape, although he was placed once or twice in rather a hazardous position, by his own imprudence and that of his comrade. He succeeded, not without some trouble, in ridding himself of this personage, and being still in the Venetian territory, he threw himself, alone and on foot, into some of the by-roads, in order to avoid observation. Being entirely exhausted, as night drew on, he sought hospitality in the nearest house, which proved, singularly enough, to be that of one of the principal police-officers, who with his whole suite, were actually out at the time in pursuit of the fugitive. A good night’s rest restored his strength, and in two or three days more he found himself in safety beyond the limits of the jurisdiction of the Most Serene Republic. He then repaired to Paris, where he was well received by Cardinal de Bernis, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, whom he had known as Ambassador at Venice, and who procured him an appointment under government.

We shall not pursue any further the detail of our author’s adventures, which are in general of a wholly private character, and, as we have said before, not always particularly edifying. The narrative of his escape from the prisons of the Inquisition, which we have here presented to our readers in an abridged form, is not only interesting in itself, but may lead to some useful reflections. Accustomed as we are in this country, to a state of things in which Liberty and Law walk hand in hand, we are not, perhaps, sufficiently alive to the advantages we enjoy. Our system, like every other, has its bright and dark sides, and it is the infirmity of human nature, to underrate the value of good things in possession, and to exaggerate their real or supposed inconveniences.

— “ It so falls out  
That what we have, we prize not to the worth  
While we enjoy it; but being lacked and lost,  
Why then we reck the value: then we feel  
The virtue that possession could not give us  
While it was ours.”

When we see the tranquillity of private life, and the sanctity of private character invaded in the struggles of contending parties, we are apt to believe for the moment, — especially, if our own party happen to be in the minority, — that all this toil and trouble are but much ado about nothing, and that the State is better off under the quiet sway of arbitrary government. A review, in detail, of some of the cases of outrage on personal rights, which are continually occurring in such governments, is well fitted to remove these impressions, and to bring home to our minds, under a clear and lively point of view, the blessings of liberty. The inconveniences of which we complain, are in a great measure ideal. The politician who sees his favorite candidate defeated, or witnesses the success of a measure which he deems injurious, exclaims in the first agony of disappointment, that rather than be so governed, he would prefer the aristocracy of Venice, Inquisition and all. A night’s rest, however, generally takes off the edge of his trouble, and the next day he goes about his business with as good a heart as before. But there is nothing imaginary in a visit from a company of forty archers, who enter your bed-chamber before you are up in the morning, and carry you off to a wretched dungeon, where your only *habeas corpus* must be an iron tool of your own forging, and where, if you do not happen to possess the extraordinary strength, energy and resource that distinguished our author, you may remain for the rest of your life, without knowing the cause of your confinement. The constant repetition of similar, or still more revolting cases, of the violation of private right by the old governments of Europe, was among the causes that operated most strongly in bringing on the revolutionary movements of the last century, and we may add, most clearly justified them. The leading champion of liberty in the National Assembly of France, Count de Mirabeau, had been seventeen times imprisoned by the arbitrary process of a *lettre de cachet*, — that is, — upon a mere order of the government, without being heard in his defence, or even informed of his crime. Is it wonder-

ful, that when he and others who were similarly situated, had found an opportunity of telling their story to the people, the foundations of the Bastile began to totter? We are not blind to the inconveniences, abuses and dangers of our political system, but while it gives us a permanent national peace, instead of the wars that constantly desolate Europe, and complete security for person and property, instead of the Bastiles, the bowstrings, — the Leads, — the Siberias, and the star-chambers of the Old World, we shall not seriously quarrel with it, although it should bring out occasionally an ill-tempered essay in the newspapers, or even elect, at times, the wrong man for President.

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#### ART. IV.—Machiavelli.

1. *Opere di Niccolò Machiavelli, Cittadino e Segretario Florentino.* X. Vol. Italia. 1826.
2. *Machiavel, son génie et ses Erreurs,* XI. Tom. Par A. F. ARTAUD. Paris. 1833.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI was born at Florence, on the fifth of May, fourteen hundred and sixty-nine, of an ancient and noble family.\* His father, Bernardo Machiavelli, traced back his ancestry to the middle of the ninth century, where it became mingled with the race of the ancient Marquesses of Tuscany. His mother was descended from the Counts of Borgo Nuovo of Fucecchio, whose name may be found in the annals of Tuscany, as early as the tenth century. The honor of both families had been supported by a long line of republican dignitaries, and a right to some employment in the service of the state, had become almost hereditary in them. It is probable that the attention of Niccolò, was also directed to a similar line of duty, and that his early habits and tastes were carefully formed for public life. But the meagre and indistinct records, that have been preserved of his youth, throw but a feeble light upon his early history ; and all that can be

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\* The greater part of Machiavelli's history is contained in his familiar letters and official despatches. The most voluminous of his biographers, M. Artaud, has been contented with translating or condensing them. But they still open a rich and noble field, which, with the additions and illustrations that careful research might derive from other sources, would yield an enviable harvest to the diligent historian.